

## Information for the House Natural Resources Committee

### Supporting HJ8

From: Families for Outdoor Recreation, Billings, Montana

#### Letter to the editor: Forest, Jobs and Recreation Act really a

#### wilderness bill

[http://www.bozemandailychronicle.com/opinions/letters\\_to\\_editor/article\\_1e72940c-3975-11e2-b333-0019bb2963f4.html](http://www.bozemandailychronicle.com/opinions/letters_to_editor/article_1e72940c-3975-11e2-b333-0019bb2963f4.html)

By Brad Grein

Posted: Wednesday, November 28, 2012 9:03 am | [0 comments](#)

Lawmakers must spend an enormous amount of time conjuring up awe inspiring, charismatic names for their legislative bills that can only be described as an attempt to deceive the American people.

Forest Jobs and Recreation Act. Sounds great, right? Truth be told, these jobs have little chance of being created. Job creation is a critical component to our economic recovery and no one will argue that point. On the surface, everything looks great, except for one key element of fact.

Nearly every fuels reduction program or logging project proposed, has been held up in court, or stopped by lawsuits filed on behalf of environmentalists. Sen. Tester knows this, and has done nothing to remedy these job-killing, lawsuits. If job creation is the key component, why hasn't Sen. Tester addressed the facts? No jobs will be created until a trigger mechanism is put in place that would ensure jobs take priority over permanent wilderness designation.

Recreation, well we are all for that. The problem is there are no new recreational opportunities in this bill, besides, recreational areas and types of use are determined by travel plans established by individual forests, not Congress. Several users groups were not invited to a seat at the table when this bill was conceived behind closed doors.

FJRA is not a jobs bill and it is not a recreation bill, it is, quite simply, a wilderness bill. There is more to a legislative bill than a fancy name, and this smells more of political payback than what is right for job creation and responsible management of our public lands.

The U.S. Forest Service manages 16.9 million acres in Montana; roadless areas amount to 6.4 million acres. Designated Wilderness in Montana amounts to 3.4 million acres. Do the math.

Enough is enough. Public lands can be managed and regulated responsibly without wilderness designation.

Brad Grein

West Yellowstone

## Tester forestry bill a 'whopper' in job creation prediction

[http://mtstandard.com/news/opinion/mailbag/tester-forestry-bill-a-whopper-in-job-creation-prediction/article\\_fb9163b6-267b-11e2-959e-0019bb2963f4.html](http://mtstandard.com/news/opinion/mailbag/tester-forestry-bill-a-whopper-in-job-creation-prediction/article_fb9163b6-267b-11e2-959e-0019bb2963f4.html)

November 04, 2012 5:35 am • [Our readers speak](#)

After being inundated by political advertisements spouting negative aspects of the opponent while professing their own stellar political careers a total falsehood has been reached that I can't ignore.

Senator Tester's radio ad for his "Forest Jobs and Recreation Act" (S-268) is the biggest whopper of them all.

I realize that the timber industry is on the ropes in Montana and the mill owners are grasping at straws to stay in business, however the ad misrepresents the facts. The bill does not create hundreds of jobs nor restore millions of acres.

To paraphrase the bill: There is only a requirement to put treatment under contract not to harvest a single tree.

Congressman Denny Rehberg proposed a compromise that would allow wilderness additions after harvest has taken place. This was unacceptable to the radical environmentalists that support Tester.

The bill proposes a grand total of 100,000 acres promised to the timber industry out of a conservative estimate by the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation of 5.2 million acres of beetle killed trees.

It will take 650 years to harvest the current mortality on the forests of Montana. The only guaranteed result of S-268 is more than a million acres of restricted access to public lands.

No jobs will be created except for the attorneys representing the radical environmentalists who support Tester, who will sue over every contract for harvest.

That means more than 5 million acres of timber left to burn, sickening the young and elderly with smoke filled skies. And more than a million acres of public land placed in restricted use status. A lose-lose for Montana.

Steve Jennings

40 Bryce Lane

Dillon

## Forest Jobs and Recreation Act: Bill does not benefit all involved

[http://missoulian.com/news/opinion/mailbag/forest-jobs-and-recreation-act-bill-does-not-benefit-all/article\\_6b6688e2-37ad-11e1-a9c5-001871e3ce6c.html](http://missoulian.com/news/opinion/mailbag/forest-jobs-and-recreation-act-bill-does-not-benefit-all/article_6b6688e2-37ad-11e1-a9c5-001871e3ce6c.html)

January 05, 2012 9:30 am

[\(0\) Comments](#)

In response to the letters on the Opinion page from Robin Poole (Missoulian, Dec. 22) and Loren Rose (guest column, Missoulian, Dec. 22):

Poole says the Forest Jobs and Recreation Act includes and benefits all. Rose says horsemen, bicyclists, snowmobilers and hikers all signed on to this proposed legislation. That's wonderful, but what about ranching, mining, motorized recreationists and all the businesses that depend on these people for their livelihood and the people they employ? If the Forest Jobs and Recreation Act includes and benefits all, why are these groups who use the forest so conspicuously absent from your list of supporters?

In an effort to sell this proposed legislation to the citizens of Montana, in 2009 Sen. Jon Tester had listening sessions in several cities in Montana, Butte being one. He talked and the people listened. He would not answer a question from anybody in front of the audience. You could only ask a question after the listening session had ended.

Congressman Denny Rehberg came to Butte and had not one but three listening sessions at Montana Tech over two days to address the gridlock in managing our national forests. Unlike Tester, Rehberg listened to anyone who wanted to speak or ask a question. Unlike Tester, Rehberg asked questions of the audience. Again, unlike Tester's listening sessions, where there was no dialog with the audience, you could speak for or against Tester's wilderness legislation. Rehberg came to Butte and many other cities to get many thoughts, opinions and ideas on how best to manage our national forests.

I want to thank Rehberg for listening to the concerns of all the citizens who attended his meetings.

*Frank Kriewald, Butte*

### **Letter to the editor: Montana already has enough wilderness**

Posted: Tuesday, October 23, 2012 12:15 am

[http://www.bozemandailychronicle.com/opinions/letters\\_to\\_editor/article\\_5712e0e4-1d2a-11e2-8a9f-0019bb2963f4.html](http://www.bozemandailychronicle.com/opinions/letters_to_editor/article_5712e0e4-1d2a-11e2-8a9f-0019bb2963f4.html)

Once again Senator Tester is using back door politics to try to get his S268 Forest, Jobs and Recreation bill passed by inserting the bill into the Interior, Forest Service and EPA Funding Bill. Tester has tried twice before and now again to get this bill passed by inserting it in an appropriations bill. He says this will create hundreds of logging jobs. That is a joke because we all know that when any timber sale becomes available, the environmental groups will file law suits to stop the sale and no logging will ever take place. What this bill will do is create another 650,000 acres of wilderness which only 3% of the population uses and Montana already has too many acres of wilderness. We need to thank Representative Denny Rehberg for getting this removed from past appropriations bills, and hopefully he can do it again. Better yet, vote him in as our next U.S. Senator.

Janet Carlson

Bozeman MT

## **Letter mailed to the Montana Standard on January 28, 2013**

Date: January 28, 2013, 12:40:12 PM MST

To: "Editor Standard" <[editor@mtstandard.com](mailto:editor@mtstandard.com)>

Subject: Opinion Article

I respectfully request you publish my opinion on Rep. Kerry White's resolution opposing Testers proposed Forest Jobs and Recreation Act at your next opportunity

I recently listened to testimony in Helena Capitol Building on House Joint Resolution 8, which would send a message to Congress that the State of Montana opposes the passage of the Forest Jobs and Recreation Act of 2011.

Those testifying for the resolution included elected State and County representatives and private sector individuals who live in the communities adversely impacted by the Act. Loggers, miners, stock growers, realtors, motorized interests and other private individuals each had legitimate reasons why the Act should not proceed, if ever, until significant changes are made to the Act and the process used to draft it.

I also listened to those opposing the resolution whose interests and communities might benefit from the Act. They included elected officials of adjacent County governments, wood products company owners, officers/members of non-profit organizations such as the Montana Wilderness Society, Wildlife Foundation, Mile High Back Country Horsemen, a wilderness outfitter, and a ranch owner who makes a profit from wilderness designations.

What struck me most is those opposing the resolution have nothing to lose, and everything to gain. If Congress DOES NOT approve the Act, several things will continue to happen. The global market will drive the wood products industry profits. No company is too large to fail. Some entrepreneur will purchase the sawmill, and the former owner will retain his classic auto collection. The new owners will retain the employees who can make the operation profitable, or they will convert the facility for other income opportunities. The anti-carbon groups will continue to take legal action against the misguided federal agencies to replenish their funds with tax payer funded court awards. And a horse trader with crystal ball insights on local business economics will continue to testify at these hearings that wilderness won't devastate long time multiple use small businesses.

Larry Krizan

Wise River

### **Forest bill doesn't guarantee jobs**

[http://billingsgazette.com/news/opinion/mailbag/forest-bill-doesn-t-guarantee-jobs/article\\_978bc131-0b8a-55ac-a2fc-9a173e48a02c.html](http://billingsgazette.com/news/opinion/mailbag/forest-bill-doesn-t-guarantee-jobs/article_978bc131-0b8a-55ac-a2fc-9a173e48a02c.html)

November 30, 2012 12:00 am

Bringing Montanans together again is not something S 268 (Forest Jobs and Recreation Act) will do. Does this bill guarantee jobs will be created? Absolutely not! Does this bill guarantee logging will be done? Absolutely not! This designates 70,000 acres of timber harvest over 15 years, or 4,500 acres per year.

The harvests are restoration harvests which require the timber companies to remove all road after the harvest is complete. We all know environmental groups will tie up any logging sales in court, which means no logging will be done.

Does this bill guarantee 650,000 acres of wilderness will be created? Absolutely! Plus, they want to lock up another 350,000 acres of other restricted use areas. Creating more unnecessary wilderness means 97 percent of the recreating public will never visit this area again.

Hopefully our newly elected state representative will continue the effort to defeat this bill.

Carl J. Krob

Bozeman

### **Letter to the editor: Tester legislation won't unify Montanans**

[http://www.bozemandailychronicle.com/opinions/letters\\_to\\_editor/article\\_4882ff6c-3d61-11e2-af3a-001a4bcf887a.html](http://www.bozemandailychronicle.com/opinions/letters_to_editor/article_4882ff6c-3d61-11e2-af3a-001a4bcf887a.html)

**By Carl J. Krob**

Posted: Monday, December 3, 2012 8:51 am | [0 comments](#)

Bringing Montanans together again is not something S268 Forest Jobs and Recreation Act will do as the full page ad in the Nov. 25 Bozeman Daily Chronicle would like you to believe. Does this bill guarantee jobs will be created? Absolutely not! Does this bill guarantee logging will be done? Absolutely not! This designates 70,000 acres of timber harvest over 15 years, or 4,500 acres per year. The harvests are restoration harvests which require the timber companies to remove all road after the harvest is complete. We all know environmental groups will tie up any logging sales in the court system, which means no logging will be done, thus no jobs will be created.

Does this bill guarantee 650,000 acres of wilderness will be created? Absolutely! Plus, they want to lock up another 350,000 acres of other restricted use areas. Creating more unnecessary wilderness means 97 percent of the recreating public will never visit this area again. Not a fair way to bring Montanans together. Hopefully our newly elected state representative will continue the effort to defeat this bill.

Carl J. Krob

Bozeman

### **Viewpoint: Tester wilderness bill bad for Montana**

[http://www.ravallirepublic.com/news/opinion/viewpoint/article\\_72e98e6c-1aff-11e2-9d29-0019bb2963f4.html](http://www.ravallirepublic.com/news/opinion/viewpoint/article_72e98e6c-1aff-11e2-9d29-0019bb2963f4.html)

October 20, 2012 3:46 pm • [By Dan Thompson](#)

Senator Tester has once again resorted to legislative trickery to get his unpopular and unworkable Wilderness Bill through Congress. This time, he has managed to get this bill inserted into a Senate Interior Appropriations Bill. Senator Tester hasn't even been able to get this ugly

duckling out of committee in the Senate, and has repeatedly attempted to slip it into otherwise worthy legislation – a common but unsavory Washington, DC tactic.

Senator Tester doggedly claims that his Wilderness Bill is the result of collaborative efforts and has broad-based support among Montanans. Many disagree: The bulk of this bill was provided by the Beaverhead-Deerlodge Partnership, a “collaborative” group of two timber companies and two environmental groups. Following the development of the Partnership Agreement in a series of closed meetings, the Partnership shopped the Agreement around the state for endorsements. Pro Wilderness groups readily signed on as did a few timber companies. But many timber companies, all County governments, and all recreational groups declined to endorse the Beaverhead-Deerlodge portion of the bill. It takes a great deal of creativity to label this process as “broad-based collaborative support” for this bill.

And the provisions of Senator Tester’s bill are highly problematic. The only thing that will happen for certain if this bill is enacted is the addition of 660,000 acres of new Designated Wilderness. The bill’s provisions for mandated timber harvest are not likely to happen. The bill does nothing to prevent litigation of sales of timber by environmental groups. History demonstrates that it is virtually impossible to complete timber sales on public land in the face of endless litigation by some of the more radical environmental groups. This bill does nothing to remedy this situation. Similarly, some of the areas defined by this bill for “recreation” may be managed as defacto Wilderness or severely restricted to public access. The management prescriptions for these “recreation” areas are so vague and in some cases so restrictive that hunters, fishermen, OHV enthusiasts, snowmobilers, and mountain bikers are doubtful that their continued access to these areas will be guaranteed.

Most troubling of all, however, is the fact that Senator Tester’s Wilderness bill is not consistent with existing Forest Plans and will create Designated Wilderness in areas which have been professionally determined to be unsuitable for Wilderness designation!! While I have been unable to obtain accurate information for the Lolo, Kootenai or BLM Wilderness designations, this bill will designate as Wilderness at least 175,000 acres of land that does not meet Wilderness criteria in the Beaverhead-Deerlodge Forest. For the entire bill, that number is likely to be much larger. For example, the bill will designate 65,700 acres of BLM Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) as Wilderness. For those of you who have visited BLM WSAs, you are aware that few if any of these areas meet Wilderness criteria. The tendency of Congressmen to declare unsuitable areas as Wilderness degrades the quality of our valued existing Wilderness Areas and denies historical access to 97% of the public. Regardless of which side of the “wilderness” fence you are on, this should be a troubling provision in Senator Tester’s bill.

In many ways it is tragic that Senator Tester has so doggedly promoted this ugly and unpopular bill and has chosen to resort to slimy legislative gimmickry to try to get it passed. It is an unfortunate legacy for what has otherwise been a reasonably adequate term in Congress.

*Dan Thompson*

*Victor*

## **Wilderness bill bad for Montana counties: Rehberg was right to stop Tester measure from passing**

[http://missoulian.com/news/opinion/columnists/wilderness-bill-bad-for-montana-counties-rehberg-was-right-to/article\\_9eb57228-6dde-11e1-aa71-001871e3ce6c.html](http://missoulian.com/news/opinion/columnists/wilderness-bill-bad-for-montana-counties-rehberg-was-right-to/article_9eb57228-6dde-11e1-aa71-001871e3ce6c.html)

March 14, 2012 8:00 am • [Guest column by JOHN OSTLUND and 10 COUNTY COMMISSIONERS IN MONTANA](#)  
(0) [Comments](#)

For two years, Sen. Jon Tester has stumped around western Montana surrounded by supporters of his wilderness bill. He's posed for photo ops and hosted political news conferences while his handlers carefully shielded him from the widespread opposition to his plan. The reasonable objections that did get through were dismissed as "extremist."

But through the spin, there are plenty of good reasons for people to oppose the senator's legislation. We hope that Tester will abandon his efforts to pass this bill with procedural tricks and focus his effort instead of building a consensus in Montana.

One of the most obvious problems with Tester's legislation is it will almost certainly fail to accomplish its most basic goal. The idea seems simple enough – conservationists get new wilderness, Montanans get new timber jobs. The problem is, while the conservationists get what they want, the jobs are far from certain. Not only can the timber projects be delayed, they remain vulnerable to the same legal hurdles standing in their way today.

This is the focal point for Congressman Denny Rehberg's opposition to this legislation, and he actually tried to work with Tester to find a solution. His efforts at bipartisanship were rejected – Tester claimed he was worried changes would prevent his bill from passing in the Senate.

There are other reasons to oppose the bill.

The legislation seeks to trade timber production for wilderness. It allows temporary economic development of some land in exchange for permanent economic dislocation of other land.

The hoped-for economic gains come at the expense of other Montana counties. Some counties, like Missoula, get the jobs while others, like Beaverhead and Madison, get the unwanted wilderness.

Even worse, the tax revenues gained or lost as a result of this bill will affect funding for our schools and firefighters, and will impact the distribution of critical public services around the state.

Tester should have invited county commissioners to help craft his legislation in the first place. But despite his claims, the bill was drafted behind closed doors. Far more people were excluded from the process than were invited. It's not surprising that the fight was fixed, the winners and losers already chosen.

With major problems in the legislation and substantial opposition around the state, Tester is the only one who is surprised his bill hasn't received a rubber stamp of approval. He's looking all over for someone else to blame, and he conveniently found Rehberg.

His claim doesn't make sense. According to Tester, Rehberg killed his wilderness bill for political gain. If his legislation were actually popular and good for Montana, he might be right. There's no evidence that passing this legislation would be a feather in Tester's re-election hat.

In fact, the opposite is true. Passing this unpopular, poorly constructed bill would do much more to hurt Tester than help him. If Rehberg was interested only in scoring political points, the best thing he could do is stand aside and let Tester's bill become law.

Rehberg did the right thing because while letting the bill pass would be politically convenient, it would be bad for Montanans. He stood up and prevented his political opponent from making a serious blunder he could have taken advantage of. Good for Rehberg.

Instead of attacking Rehberg for stopping his wilderness bill from passing, Tester should be thanking him.

*John Ostlund is a Yellowstone County commissioner. This opinion is also signed by Ravalli County Commissioner Greg Chilcott; Carbon County Commissioner John Grewell; Stillwater County Commissioner Gerald Dell; Phillips County commissioners Richard Dunbar and Lesley Robinson; Beaverhead County commissioners Mike McGinley, Tom Rice and Garth Haugland; and Madison County commissioners Dave Schulz and James P. Hart.*

## **Our Readers Speak: Tester bill nothing but wilderness guarantee**

[http://mtstandard.com/news/opinion/mailbag/our-readers-speak-tester-bill-nothing-but-wilderness-guarantee/article\\_1aee601e-441e-11e2-ab6c-0019bb2963f4.html](http://mtstandard.com/news/opinion/mailbag/our-readers-speak-tester-bill-nothing-but-wilderness-guarantee/article_1aee601e-441e-11e2-ab6c-0019bb2963f4.html)

December 12, 2012 12:00 am • [by Mike Dotson](#)

[\(0\) Comments](#)

I can't believe people are being conned into supporting Sen. Jon Tester's Forest Jobs and Recreation Act.



This is just Tester and the extreme environmentalists' way of sneaking through a bill which creates almost 700,000 acres of wilderness the day it is signed, but no guarantee of jobs. That's the reason Tester couldn't even get this bill out of committee in the Senate.

Tester needs to talk to the people that live here and use this land. Tester and the other lawmakers need to come up with a bill that makes sense managing the forest and keeps our land open to use for recreation.

Mike Dotson

3119 Keokuk

Butte

## **Senator Tester's Wilderness Bill is nothing more than payoff to special interests**

<http://www.madisoniannews.com/senator-testers-wilderness-bill-is-nothing-more-than-payoff-to-special-interests/>

Posted on January 4, 2012 by [Greg Lemon](#)

**By Ray Shaw**

I am writing in regards to Senator Tester's Forest Jobs and Recreation Act, which is nothing more than a Wilderness Bill and more government control – 600,000 acres to be exact, how much wilderness is enough? Montana people that are engaged in everyday life of keeping their businesses going whether they be main street Montana, ranching, recreation, hunting, fishing, etc. were for the most part left out of putting this bill together. In other words the backroom deals went on without us. Why on earth do we have to give the environmental and special interest groups involved in this bill all this wilderness just to put people back to work?

We all know that our forests need cleaning up now to help prevent wildfires and to prevent the loss of our valuable timber resource. We must protect recreation, fishing, hunting, cattle grazing, timber harvest and other multiple uses. Believe it or not we do believe in clean air, clean water, etc. We all want nothing more than to put our timber industry back to work. The sorry thing is that the people supporting this bill will be the first people lined up to stop any logging. Isn't that sad. Most of these environmental and special interest groups could care less about Montanans and what we are about. As we all know Senator Tester receives more lobbyist money than any other senator or congressman in Washington D.C. All this bill ever was is a payback to these groups. The real people this bill effects were never brought to the table. For instance at a public meeting held in Dillon, which was nothing of the kind, Senator Tester did not face the audience and when done went out the backdoor. Do you call that a public meeting? Left out again.

Many livestock producers in this area depend on public grazing. Many livestock people would end up selling out, either going somewhere else or giving up the cattle business altogether. The cattle industry helps support our schools, hospitals, and small town businesses. Do you get the point?

The Snowcrest Mountains are summer grazing for many of these ranchers. These mountains do not fit the criteria for wilderness to start with. This fall, a group of volunteers and people who run cattle on these permits, with the permission of the Forest Service, spent a whole day spraying noxious weeds on a small part of these permits. This is another reason for not turning the Snowcrests into wilderness. Left unchecked the weed problem will get completely out of control destroying both habitat and water quality. Why isn't the Forest Service taking care of the weed problem? Is it lack of money or not caring? Hunters, horseman, fisherman, hikers all enjoy the Snowcrests the way they are, why do we need to give in to these environmental and special interest groups? Of course it's a payoff, and more government control, ya think? This wilderness bill will have a negative impact on all Montanans. Clean and healthy forests plus the jobs that help us get there helps all of Montana. We all must remember that if something is designated wilderness it is wilderness forever and cannot be changed. Enough is enough.

Many people are accusing Congressman Rehberg for the failure of this bill to pass. Nothing could be further from the truth. As I have said before, this is nothing but a payback to environmental and special interest groups that fill Senator Tester's pockets. A common sense approach is needed to make all this work and Senator Tester's bill certainly does not do that. Montanans do not like being left out or pushed aside. Let's not let politics, environmental and special interest groups dictate what is good and right for all Montanans. We the people should certainly be able to sit down and make this work with a common sense approach.

## **Letter to the editor: Forest jobs bill a land grab for environmental lawyers**

[http://www.bozemandailychronicle.com/opinions/article\\_c820c274-7dbc-11e0-b11a-001cc4c002e0.html](http://www.bozemandailychronicle.com/opinions/article_c820c274-7dbc-11e0-b11a-001cc4c002e0.html)

**By Stacy Bragg, Brad Grein and Ben Erickson**

Posted: Sunday, May 15, 2011 12:00 am | [3 comments](#)

Sen. Tester's Forest Jobs and Recreation Act (FJRA) will not create jobs based on one inevitable fact: lawsuits. It has been made perfectly clear that when environmental groups submit lawsuits to biased, agenda-driven District Court judges from Montana and the Ninth Circuit Court, wrong decisions are rendered. Every opportunity for forest-created jobs will be held up in court, and no work will ever be administered. The environmental groups bank on this. As in every case, they compromise nothing.

Sen. Tester's statement of a broad coalition of user groups is false. The FJRA is a collaboration of environmental groups and mill owners that envisioned the original Beaverhead-Deerlodge

Partnership. The BDP was a misguided, disingenuous partnership based on "green-mail." The "broad coalition" is a handful of individuals and green groups looking for political power to manage public lands without public input. Anybody who did not embrace the ideas of the original BDP were not included in crafting the FJRA.

Grizzly bears, wolves, bison, logging, wilderness, wolverine and lynx are all ammunition used by environmental groups to keep our courts packed with senseless lawsuits and continuous abuse of our Equal Access to Justice Act.

Environmental groups will never stop their insane addiction to lawsuits. Why? There is too much money involved. Sen. Tester knows this and he has done nothing to protect his plan from these frivolous lawsuits. When will Americans recognize that their donations are lining the pockets of lawyers and building million-dollar office buildings for the GYC?

It is time to wake up and realize that Tester's FJRA is simply a land grab that gives environmental lawyers more opportunities to file unending lawsuits against the government. And guess whose money is going to be used to defend these cases.

Stacy Bragg, Livingston

Brad Grein, West Yellowstone

Ben Erickson, Bozeman

Citizens for Balanced Use board members

### **Forest Jobs and Recreation Act: Collaboration?**

[http://helenair.com/news/opinion/forest-jobs-and-recreation-act-collaboration/article\\_04831e22-26c1-11e0-aae9-001cc4c002e0.html](http://helenair.com/news/opinion/forest-jobs-and-recreation-act-collaboration/article_04831e22-26c1-11e0-aae9-001cc4c002e0.html)

January 23, 2011 12:16 am • By STEVE MARKS

(2) Comments

On Jan. 3 the Independent Record published an op-ed article on Sen. Tester's Forest Jobs and Recreation Act signed by Missoula County Commissioners, Lewis and Clark County Commissioners, Broadwater County Commissioners, Granite County Commissioner Susie Browning, Pyramid Mountain Lumber, Roseburg Forest Products, and Marks Lumber. The article talked about the politics of Washington taking away opportunities for a good homegrown, collaborative Montana jobs bill to create jobs and manage forests in western Montana. The article also talked about how the collaborators (which happened to be just a select few) came together and came up with the language that created the "Forest Jobs and Recreation Act."

A commissioner from Lewis and Clark County forwarded me this aforementioned letter that was drafted, I presume, from the Missoula County Commission. In the article it was stated that R-Y Timber, Sun Mountain Lumber, Pyramid Mountain Lumber, Roseburg Forest Products and

Marks Lumber, as major employers in the region, employ hundreds of employees and are dedicated members of their communities. The article went on to say how these companies continued to improve their businesses, investing in technology, adding new product lines and creating new jobs.

What the article did not mention was that collaborators did not go to Jefferson, Madison and Beaverhead counties or their commissioners until after the collaboration had taken place, at which time they asked those of us not previously involved for our blessing. Kind of a backward process. Webster defines collaboration as: "1. to work together, especially in some literary or scientific undertaking." Yet, it was only a select few involved in the collaboration.

I was specifically asked by commissioners from Lewis and Clark and Broadwater counties if I would sign on as a supporter, and I declined. I said I would only support it under these conditions:

- Release language: Any new wilderness that is created is not established until there has been a certain amount of acres treated under the forest stewardship part of the act. For example, when 10,000 acres of landscape has been treated, then the government can release 10,000 acres of wilderness.
- Existing resource use: All grazing permittees, miners and recreational vehicle users that currently have permissible use should not have to forfeit their right of that use.
- Inholdings: All private inholdings that would be included in a wilderness would have ingress and egress rights into perpetuity.
- Duration of forest landscape treatment: As a steward of the land, one does not stop taking care of the property on the 15th year, but rather into perpetuity. Under the current bill landscape treatment would stop at 15 years while wilderness goes on forever.
- Forest stewardship contracts: The bill calls for the treatment of lands by the means of large forest stewardship contracts, thus making it very difficult for a small business to participate in the treatment of these lands.
- Equal Access to Justice Act: There has to be a mechanism in the bill so that the Forest Service can do its job and extreme environmentalists cannot repeal every landscape project and timber sale that is brought forward. Under the Equal Access to Justice Act, the extreme environmental groups are taking advantage of this act to appeal all the decisions that the Forest Service makes.
- Jobs for Jobs: What about the jobs that we are going to lose from the proposed wilderness: ranching, mining and those involved in the service industry of motorized recreational use. Are these jobs, that benefit our local economies, of any less value than those of our timber industry?

The process this aforementioned letter went through to get published and “supported” resulted in the same problems that the Forest Jobs and Recreation Act had. What could have been a great piece of legislation turned sour because the process has been deeply flawed from the start; it wasn’t truly a collaborated effort and much was left out.

The closing of the editorial piece is begging Rep. Rehberg for his cooperation, saying “without this collaborative jobs bill, we will lose even more jobs in western Montana and potentially the remaining infrastructure needed to continue to process our own timber.” As mentioned above, what about the jobs we will lose in that process? Thank you, Rep. Rehberg, for putting the brakes on a bad piece of legislation.

Steve Marks is owner of Marks Lumber in Clancy.

## **Tester bill should get snowmobilers’ attention**

[http://billingsgazette.com/news/opinion/mailbag/article\\_3a43ea64-e14e-11de-a456-001cc4c002e0.html](http://billingsgazette.com/news/opinion/mailbag/article_3a43ea64-e14e-11de-a456-001cc4c002e0.html)

December 05, 2009 12:00 am

(0) Comments

Attention all winter snowmobile enthusiasts:

It is time to get off your duff and examine closely Sen. Jon Tester’s proposed bill S1470. Many riding areas will be closed and turned into wilderness if we don’t voice our opinions now.

One area brought to my attention is the McAtee Basin area south of Big Sky. We all know what a popular recreational area this is. We have fought long and hard to keep this and other areas open. We all need to write letters to Tester’s office in Butte: Attention: Eric Nylund, 125 W. Granite, Suite 200, Butte MT 59701 (phone 406-723-3277; fax 406-782-4717).

Please check out this bill for other areas that may also be in jeopardy and let them know why these areas are precious to you and why they must not be included in this bill. Write now, as a hearing is likely to be held in early December.

We cannot afford to lose any more of our cherished riding areas.

Carl Krob

Bozeman

## **An Alternative to Tester’s Forest Jobs and Recreation Act**

[http://www.flatheadbeacon.com/articles/article/an\\_alternative\\_to\\_testers\\_forest\\_jobs\\_and\\_recreation\\_act/12165](http://www.flatheadbeacon.com/articles/article/an_alternative_to_testers_forest_jobs_and_recreation_act/12165)

By Dave Skinner, 08-05-09

Two weeks ago, to much rhetoric about putting "Montanans back to work in the woods," Sen. Jon Tester introduced the "Forest Jobs and Recreation Act" (S-1470).

Tester's 84-page bill mandates that 100,000 acres be treated over a 10-year period under "stewardship" rules established in the Omnibus Public Lands Act Congress passed this spring.

In return for blessing what is, in the context of Montana's 3 million acres of beetle kill, a puny, temporary forestry program, environmentalists would see 670,000 acres of Big-W wilderness designated permanently. What a deal.

Even better, about 260,000 acres of "Protected" and "Recreation" areas will be carved out of proposed wilderness, supposedly to secure multiple-use recreation for the 98 percent of forest recreationists who use a motor. In these special areas, mining, geothermal, even forestry would all be prohibited, same as wilderness. New infrastructure (campgrounds, roads, trails) is verboten, same as wilderness. Grazing is grandfathered, but is to be managed under wilderness rules.

The only reason these areas are not "real" or "Big-W" wilderness is they would allow very limited mountain-biking, snowmobiling and on/off-road-vehicle recreation. But, like the timber "jobs" under stewardship, the access is not guaranteed. Access would be under direct control of the "Secretary concerned," either Agriculture or Interior, who could decide to close "any trail or route for the purposes of resource protection or public safety." In short, while these areas would not be "Wilderness" in name, they would be 90 percent wilderness in fact ... and the last 10 percent depends on one person.

How can it be that nearly 1 million acres of permanent Wilderness and "Wilderness Light" is traded for a temporary 10,000 acres per year of badly needed harvest, and it's a "compromise?"

The four timber companies involved in this "collaboration" probably feel they have no choice but to surrender. With the possible exception of Plum Creek, Montana's timber industry has been kicked to its knees over a period of years by a vicious combination of Congressional neglect and endless litigation. Today's rotten economy is just the knife on their throat.

As for the environmental "partners" in this scheme, S-1470 is perfect. The wilderness happens first and forever. If the "jobs" or "recreation" side is litigated into failure, the Greens have no skin in the game anymore. They'll just move the goalposts and their money to the next campaign, the next "compromise."

Now, since it's not nice to gripe without offering alternatives, here's what I'll do when I'm in the U.S. Senate:

One: Open the process. Tester's bill relies on closed-door machinations between self-selected environmental groups and sawmills. Everyone else, including elected officials, was kept completely out of the loop until the bill of goods was ready for sale. That is wrong.

Those at the table, including affected state and local elected officials, will be expected to see the process through in good faith to an agreement against which participants may not litigate once agreement is reached. Proven obstructionists can be voted out, or may leave in order to retain their litigation rights.

Two: No more moving goalposts. Any Montana wilderness/jobs/recreation "compromise" must contain binding this-and-no-more provisions that clarify and confirm Congress's intent when it passed the first Wilderness Act in 1964.

Three: "Equal protection" for multiple use. Just as wildernesses are designated and therefore permanently "protected," associated multiple-use lands and activities thereon should, at a minimum, be placed under equally permanent protection. Bonding or "loser pays" rules for litigants is one option. Even better, an agreed-upon management plan could be given a Congressional finding of "legal sufficiency," thereby becoming lawsuit-proof for a fixed period of time so as to be allowed to work.

Finally, and critically: Wilderness after, not before. In a good-faith compromise, both sides wind up better off. Goals for forestry in terms of acreage, harvest, and reduced wildfire risk should be set; goals for trail, camp and road infrastructure should be enumerated. Only when the non-wilderness objectives have been met, after a set period of 10 or 15 years, shall wilderness designation go forward.

Wow. Would I make a great Senator or what?

## **No thanks, Sen. Tester: Forest Jobs and Recreation Act is not even close to the compromise it is touted as**

[http://missoulian.com/news/opinion/columnists/no-thanks-sen-tester-forest-jobs-and-recreation-act-is/article\\_fae9fa2c-58ae-11e1-b971-0019bb2963f4.html](http://missoulian.com/news/opinion/columnists/no-thanks-sen-tester-forest-jobs-and-recreation-act-is/article_fae9fa2c-58ae-11e1-b971-0019bb2963f4.html)

February 16, 2012 8:30 am • Guest column by FRED HODGEBROOM, GREG HINKLE, VERDELL JACKSON and DANIEL ZOLNIKOV

(0) Comments

Montana's letters and editorial pages have been flooded with praise for Sen. Jon Tester's Forest Jobs and Recreation Act.

Well, here's some criticism: To begin, the name is all wrong. The forest jobs bill is first, foremost and only a wilderness bill, which would immediately lock away a million acres (660,000 acres of wilderness and another 300,000 or so of recreation areas) from all uses except primitive recreation.

In return for this million-acre lockup, propagandists promise a tidal wave of jobs and recreation to follow - someday, maybe, perhaps - an empty promise.

Ranchers know from bitter experience that grazing rights always go backward after wilderness designations. Mining, in some of the most mineral rich areas of Montana? Never - forever.

Nor does wilderness do jobs through recreation. Never has, never will. Only 2 percent of public land recreation visitor days are primitive recreation based - and fully half are hunters. The forest jobs bill would write off the other 98 percent who use wheels and motors for modern recreation, as potential customers and visitors - a terrible business model.

What about the forestry jobs the forest jobs bill allegedly creates? Using accepted Montana average harvest and employment formulas, the act would produce 55 million board feet per year for 10 years total, at best (if nobody sues). Sun Mountain Lumber alone has 50 million feet capacity, with RY Timber able to run 165 million feet per year. That doesn't count the other partners, Roseburg and Pyramid Mountain Lumber. Clearly, the bill provides nowhere near what these mills could use to maintain, much less create, jobs.

All Montanans know the Forest Service's historic multiple-use mission has been completely wrecked by environmentalist litigation, enabled by lousy federal law. Multiple-use will stay wrecked until Congress has the guts for substantial reform. But Tester's only attempt at slowing the legal monkeywrenching is a passing mention of the 2003 Healthy Forests Act's judicial review language. Have you seen any significant part of Montana's forest mess improved by that law since it passed? Nope.

Finally, what about the fundamental health of these public lands, which all Americans own and dearly want well-managed and productive? The bill would allow projects on 1.9 million acres of suitable forest on the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest. Trouble is, if the forest jobs bill isn't sued to a halt (a huge if), we'll still be stuck with 1.83 million acres of red and mostly-dead on the Beaverhead-Deerlodge 15 years from now - over 96 percent, still a disaster.

In the Swan Valley, the bill creates 88,000 acres of new wilderness in trade for roughly two sections worth of recreation area - none of which has been funded or mapped, much less built. This is compromise?

With no guarantees for anyone else, the forest jobs bill guarantees a million acres of up-front wilderness. The only guaranteed winners are Greens. Given past behavior, Greens will almost



certainly abandon their timber partners to legalistic oblivion as they move on to their next closed-doors collaboration - such as the Rocky Mountain Front.

After almost 50 years, honest Montanans deserve, and demand, legislation that will honestly and fairly settle the wilderness issue. How could the logjam be broken, honestly and fairly?

First, outstanding, legitimate wilderness, period: Study areas repeatedly found suitable by multiple agency reviews deserve designation, but the rest, found lacking time and again, should be permanently released back to multiple use.

Second, permanent protection of multiple-use equal to wilderness: Decades of obstructionist litigation (enabled by negligent law) have wrecked huge chunks of both our forests and our economy. Congress simply must end our courtroom torture. How? Loser-pays/bonding requirements; language establishing a process as legally sufficient; and language holding wilderness designation back for the duration of the pilot program.

Third, jobs and recreation first, then wilderness: To prevent any political and/or legalistic bad faith on the part of extremists and calculating mainstream environmental groups, designation of wilderness should be conditional - on the creation of real jobs, real recreation, with real results benefiting both Montana's landscape and economy over the long haul.

Until Tester (or anyone else) writes legislation with teeth, ensuring the promised jobs and recreation are just as permanent as the wilderness - no thanks.

*Fred Hodgeboom of Bigfork is a retired Forest Service forester and immediate past president of Montanans for Multiple Use. State Sens. Greg Hinkle of Thompson Falls and Verdell Jackson of Kalispell serve on the Montana Senate's Natural Resources Committee. Daniel Zolnikov, a Billings outdoor enthusiast, is executive director of Families for Outdoor Recreation.*

## **Forest Jobs and Recreation Act: Bill would close off cherished USFS roads**

[http://missoulian.com/news/opinion/mailbag/forest-jobs-and-recreation-act-bill-would-close-off-cherished/article\\_a33fb068-2be6-11e1-a561-001871e3ce6c.html](http://missoulian.com/news/opinion/mailbag/forest-jobs-and-recreation-act-bill-would-close-off-cherished/article_a33fb068-2be6-11e1-a561-001871e3ce6c.html)

December 21, 2011 9:15 am

(0) Comments

While I appreciate U.S. Sen. Jon Tester's effort to create the Forest Jobs and Recreation Act he is sponsoring, the bill creates serious problems for Montana hunters, hikers and anglers. It calls for removing forest service roads that Montanans cherish.

Let's get something straight - every time you decommission a backcountry road - which is what Tester wants to do in near wholesale fashion in his bill, you cut off precious access to our public

lands. That is an unacceptable policy for Montana and should never be allowed to occur in our state let alone be written into a piece of legislation by our own U.S. senator.

Additionally, according to Thomas DeLuca, Ph.D. and senior forest biologist for the Wilderness Society, even an organization like the Wilderness Society that promotes policies to limit Montanans' access to national forests cannot reconcile Tester's road-killing bill with a report DeLuca offered the state legislature in 2008 for a Fire Suppression Interim Committee.

DeLuca pointed out in his report that most fires happen to occur in roaded forest areas, and while DeLuca did not make the firefighting connection in his report, roaded access to those areas by firefighters is absolutely necessary to help stop the environmental degradation to water sheds and wildlife habitat so many overgrown forests on fire cause nowadays.

When I served in the state legislature with Tester, we had a saying about the Senate: "If you gave them the 10 Commandments, they would insist on amending them." Let's hope the U.S. Senate has the same inclination and Tester amends his bill to eliminate all references and funding that would strip Montana hunters, hikers and anglers of their ability to use existing Forest Service roads to access our wonderful backcountry. It's the right thing to do.

*Rick Maedje, former Montana House representative, House District 2, Fortine*

### **Forest Jobs and Recreation Act: Tester bill, wilderness unnecessary**

[http://missoulain.com/news/opinion/mailbag/article\\_ad860110-8229-11e0-be20-001cc4c002e0.html](http://missoulain.com/news/opinion/mailbag/article_ad860110-8229-11e0-be20-001cc4c002e0.html)

May 19, 2011 11:15 am

(0) Comments

It is disingenuous at best if not downright deceitful to characterize as a consensus among the interested parties, the document commonly referred to as Sen. Jon Tester's Forest Jobs and Recreation bill.

The collaboration which took place involved only a hand-picked group of supporting collaborators willing to give away those components which were meaningful to the interested parties not specifically chosen to craft the agreement.

Not mentioned is that the collaborators reportedly did not go to Jefferson, Beaverhead and Madison counties and their commissioners until after the collaboration had taken place.

Many people question the need for more wilderness. In 1964 the Wilderness Act created about 9 million acres of protection for our most treasured lands. This does not include national parks and a wide assortment of other "treasured and protected lands" which are managed with administrative restrictions to protect and preserve these also special places. Since then, there has been a 1,200 percent increase. Some would call this excessive.

There is nothing in regard to stewardship of our national forests that is guaranteed to take place if this bill were to pass that couldn't take place without it – except creating another 700,000 acres of unneeded and unnecessary wilderness. This seems to be the only guarantee.

This bill does not seem to serve the greater public interest but rather the interests of a select few. Untold as of the 18 of May, 2011, is the attempted bundling of Tester's bill along with around another 100 bills into an omnibus bill to try to get another back door passage of the bill (S268).

This does not represent the kind of transparency expected of our congressional leaders. The ends do not justify the means.

*Dirk Ibsen,*

*Missoula*

### **Group proposes change in wilderness proposal**

[http://www.dailyinterlake.com/news/local\\_montana/article\\_eff074fa-52de-11e1-8ef3-0019bb2963f4.html](http://www.dailyinterlake.com/news/local_montana/article_eff074fa-52de-11e1-8ef3-0019bb2963f4.html)

Posted: Wednesday, February 8, 2012 9:27 pm

By JIM MANN/The Daily Inter Lake | [1 comment](#)

The Northwest Montana Patriots Association, one of more than a dozen Tea Party groups in the state, is weighing in on the Montana wilderness issue with Sen. Jon Tester.

The group is doing it with an unusual states' rights suggestion to turn over management authority of some federal lands to the state as other federal lands are designated as wilderness under Tester's Forest Jobs and Recreation Act.

The bill has been stalled in Congress for three years because it "failed to strike the appropriate balance between competing groups interested in the legislation," the association's president, Mark Agather, wrote in a recent letter to Tester. "We suggest the principle reason for this failure is the fact that the amount of proposed wilderness so far exceeds the amount of land opened up to use for jobs which are so critically needed at this point in time."

Critics of the bill regularly point out that it would definitely designate about 660,000 acres as wilderness, but it's not certain to create jobs through its forest stewardship provisions because of likely environmental litigation.

"Most Montanans would like to have more control over the natural resources of our state since natural resource legislation in the past has so dramatically affected all of our daily lives," Agather wrote.

Thus his proposal: "For every acre of land placed into wilderness, an acre of land would be put under the management of the state of Montana and subject only to the laws of our state."

Asked if that would be legal or likely, Agather said Congress could put the state of Montana in charge of some federal land if it chose to do so.

"They have the right to do that, but the issue is do they want to," he said. "Congress can do anything they want with the land."

Contrary to some media stories and commentary about the Tea Party movement fading, Agather said it is more organized than ever and Montana's groups are prepared to be active in issues and elections.

The Northwest Montana Patriots Association organized as a 501(c)4 nonprofit group last fall. It has a board of directors, about 24 "core members" and e-mail correspondence with about 600 people, Agather said.

Organizing as a nonprofit clears the way for fundraising that will translate to more effective political activism, such as holding candidate forums and other events, according to Agather, a former chairman of the Flathead Republican Party.

"There's just a way to go about these things if you want to be effective," he said. "You can't just be a coffee klatch."

There are 17 similar groups in Montana that are organized under the Montana Tea Party Coalition, which is affiliated with the national Tea Party Patriots.org.

Agather said the groups will have a strong presence at this weekend's Montana Republican Winter Kickoff convention in Billings.

Reporter Jim Mann may be reached at 758-4407 or by email [atjmann@dailyinterlake.com](mailto:atjmann@dailyinterlake.com).

## **Forest Jobs and Recreation Act: A disguised environmentalist agenda**

[http://missoulian.com/news/opinion/mailbag/forest-jobs-and-recreation-act-a-disguised-environmentalist-agenda/article\\_9508e4ce-5977-11e1-999c-0019bb2963f4.html](http://missoulian.com/news/opinion/mailbag/forest-jobs-and-recreation-act-a-disguised-environmentalist-agenda/article_9508e4ce-5977-11e1-999c-0019bb2963f4.html)

February 17, 2012 9:00 am

(0) Comments

I've come to expect some outrageous propaganda from a tiny, self-serving minority of the public lands and forest users, but the Missoulian guest column (Jan. 30) trying to sell Sen. Jon Tester's Forest Jobs and Recreation Act exceeds the outrageous.

Trust them, they ask - when loggers from Seeley Lake are throwing their fellow loggers from Beaverhead and Madison counties under the bus, by proposing most of the new wilderness from the Beaverhead and Madison forests.

Trust them, they ask - when they promise 100,000 acres of timber harvest, but they fail to address the legal grounds for environmental lawsuits that have stopped timber sales.

Trust them, they ask - when they refuse to require timber harvest prior to wilderness, but we know there can be no harvest after wilderness.

Trust them, they ask - when they say this bill will create jobs. But when has wilderness ever increased logging or created a positive job balance?

Trust them, they ask - when the few timber companies backing this bill get "stimulated" with special government loans (Missoulian, Aug. 13, 2009). Apparently the "industry support" has been bought and paid for.

Trust them when they say this bill has growing support.

I say - give me a break! This is a carefully disguised wilderness bill that is political payback to rich environmentalists for their past support, nothing more.

*Gene Nelson, Missoula*